

Nontraditional Pathway to STEM Classroom

Presenters: Rep. Josh Byrnes and exec. director Jeff Weld

Rep. Byrnes began the session by discussing background and current action within the legislature regarding alternative licensure. He is seeking guidance from the BOEE director. The Kansas model was offered up for consideration - a "visiting scholar certificate" and a restricted teacher license. Another idea proffered was a PLTW -Only certificate. The CAPS in Overland Park Kansas (Center for Advanced Professional Studies) is a model worth replicating:

www.bvcaps.org/s/1403/start.aspx

Weld shared the results of a recent study conducted by the Council's administrative team that found of ten years' sampling of previous STEM graduates from Iowa's public universities, a sizable proportion would entertain teaching as an alternate profession if the pathway were amenable to their stations in life. The report is available

at <http://www.iowastem.gov/imsep/annual-reports-publications-and-studies>

Moreover, Executive Order 74 which created the STEM Council mandates support of recruitment and preparation of outstanding STEM educators. Given that there is demand for STEM educators, there is a market for STEM educators, and that the Iowa-Teach Math & Science model has been discontinued on account of retention challenges through undergraduate programs, the Council will support Intern Licensure programs in the state for FY2014 by scholarships to math, science, and technology candidates. Intern license programs are offered at the Regent universities as well as Kaplan, Maharishi University of Management, and Morningside college. BOEE director Magee cited the CTE alternate pathway to the classroom as a model to more fully consider for other teaching fields.

Evidence is at a premium in determining future actions on this front. What sorts of programs can demonstrate effectiveness? Session participants engaged in lively discussion regarding honoring the skill sets and professional knowledge base essential to be an effective educator, balanced against the reality of shortage and the candidacy of STEM professionals unlikely to navigate traditional certification pathways. Balance and evidence-based decision-making are key moving forward.